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U. S. of America.

PAID

Rome, Italy, Thursday Evening, May 2, 1889.

My Dear Wife: I presume after what I wrote in my last letter, you will be a little surprised at the heading of this one. I intended to write to you last evening or the evening before, but it seemed as if I could not get it done. As I mentioned in my last letter, I left Rome on Tuesday morning for Naples, where I arrived about two o'clock. I immediately inquired about a train for Pompeii, and found there was one standing on another track, which would start in a little while. So, without leaving the station, I got on the Pompeii train, which place I reached before four o'clock. The station is just a few steps from the entrance to the excavated city. The hotel where I intended to stop stands just at the other end of Pompeii. The hotel man was there with a free 'Bus, so I sent my sachels and overcoat with him and I immediately got my ticket and guide, and went into the old city of Pompeii. It was very interesting. There are many strange things about it, but it would be exceedingly difficult to give any satisfactory account of it in a letter. But I think I can help you to get a clearer notion of it when I come home. I went almost all over it. After all, unless one wishes to make a special study of some particular things, I do not see that much time can be spent very profitably. The houses were all much alike - far more uniformity than in houses at the present day - unless it be the long rows of houses all alike in Philadelphia, for instance.

The guide showed me a good many things I should not have seen without him. When through with Pompeii, I went across the road to my hotel. It proved to be rather a crude affair, still I had a comfortable room, a clean bed, and fair supper and breakfast - The charges were moderate, so that I had no special cause to be dissatisfied. On the morning they put me up a lunch to take with me. After I got to the hotel, I spent the evening, until I went to bed, except while I was eating supper, looking at Vesuvius. I had a fine view of it and enjoyed it very much. In the morning, at half past seven, I got a boy to take me over to the place from which they start to ascend Vesuvius. The wire rope railway is not working, and so I had to get horses and a guide, and ride up as far as the horses could go, and then climb the rest of the way. We must have ridden at least six or seven miles. The first three or four miles the ascent was very gentle, through vineyards, olive groves, &c. The grape leaves are out two or three inches long. After this it was pretty steep, and we could not go very fast. The horses were very good, however. They were small, and quick in their movements, going nearly all the time, except where it was quite steep, in a sort of a little single-footed gait.

I feared the trip beforehand, very much. But I was anxious to make the ascent. When we got to where we dismounted, I did not like the looks of things. It looked like a

long way, and a very up-hill sort of a way to the top of Vesuvius. I concluded I needed some assistance. There were a number of men there, with a sort chairs, in which four men would carry a passenger to the top and back again for 25 francs. Of course, each man would expect another franc as a gratuity when the journey was over. There were other men there with a rope about six feet long, and a small stick through one end of it. The man went ahead, holding one end in his left hand, over his shoulder, while the person he helped followed after, holding to the stick behind with both hands. The helper also had a stout cane in his right hand with which he helped himself. The fixed price for the rope man up and down is 3 francs. Of course he expects a gratuity — all he can get you to give him — my man got half a franc. When he found I would not give more, he seemed very well satisfied. Well, I struck a bargain, as I have intimated, with the rope man, and we started. I tell you it was up-hill business. The vertical ascent was about 1600 feet. There was a sort of a path, but it was a hard road to travel. It was the steepest climbing I ever did. But in a few minutes over an hour we "got there".

I spent about an hour on the top. The present crater is what is called the new Crater. It is a small cone towards one side of the top of the mountain, some three or four hundred feet high, and very steep. It can be ascended when the eruption does not interfere. I did not try it. The guide and the rope man both insisted it was not safe, could not be done. I told them I knew men did go up there. I pointed to the path up which could plainly be seen, and asked them what made that. They said stones from the volcano rolling down. That provoked me a little, and I told them they need not tell me any more such stuff as that. We walked around to the other side, and ate our lunch. When we came back, we saw three men who had come up after us, half way, yes two-thirds way, up the small cone. I pointed to them and asked the guide what he thought of that. The steam was constantly pouring out of the Crater in great volumes, and every few minutes there would be an explosion and some cinders be blown out and fall down the sides of the small cone. Just then this occurred; the wind had changed a little, and a shower of cinders fell, some of them almost to where the three men were. They took the back track pretty hastily. I could see no object in going part way up the small cone. Unless I could get up to the edge of the new crater, I could see no use in attempting it, and evidently it was not very safe yesterday to attempt that.

It was very warm around on top where we were. The cinders, &c, felt quite warm. At some points where steam was escaping, we broke off bits of lava, and they were so hot at first that I could not hold them

in my hand. A good deal of sulphurous gas was escaping some places. Looking at the thing all around, I should not like to live up there.

The view from the lot of the mountain was a magnificent one. We had a very fine day for the ascent — much finer than the day before, and much finer than to-day.

I stood the whole trip much better than I expected. I really did not feel much tired by it. I was careful, in going up, I went slowly. I took my coat off and let the guide carry it, and when we got to the lot I put it on. I took a bottle of water with me, and kept my head a little wet, though the sun did not shine very hot.

When we got back to the town, the guide expected his gratuity. I gave him a franc. He had a notion to be indignant. Then he tried to make me ashamed of myself but that did not work very well.

I looked at the printed list of charges, and said I had paid the full price, all the law allowed and all they asked. He said yes, but gentleman always gave the guide something — often four or five francs. The young man who seemed to be in charge of the office, had been rather urging me to give him more. He said I had paid all that was required, and it was just as I chose about giving him a gratuity. I replied that I chose to give him just one franc and no more.

It provokes me to argue on a price for a thing, and then be expected to pay it over again, in the way of gratuities. Such begging I never did see, as in that country. But I will tell you more about it when I come home. Everything included the ascent of Vesuvius cost me nearly five dollars, not counting my own work anything. But I would not have insisted it for a good deal more than that.

We started at eight in the morning, and got back about two in the afternoon. At three o'clock a train came by for Naples. When I reached Naples, I got a one horse cab to go to the hotel Bristol. It was clear at the other end of the city from the station; so I got a good ride through the city, and a good view of the city on my way.

The hotel is away up on the hill side, and has a most magnificent view. The city in a semicircle around and below, Vesuvius off to one side, the other mountains stretching around, the beautiful bay lying quietly below, and rocky Capri across at the other side. Take it all in all, I think I have never had such a view before — one that united so much of both the grand and the beautiful.

So was a sight long to be remembered.

I should have enjoyed staying a day or two, going over to Capri, &c.; but it would have been expensive.

and I need the time for other places.
So, I took the train this morning and came back to Rome. I wanted to go on to Florence, but could only get there at one o'clock in the morning by going to Pisa by another route, and coming back to Florence. So I stopped off here, and will take the morning train to Florence.

I have a room for the night at the hotel d'Europe. A very pleasant, comfortable room, at one dollar for room and attendance. I went out and got my dinner at my old restaurant — 26 cts., instead of going to the Table d'hote & paying $1.20.

The country down towards Naples is a lovely one, and Naples is a beautiful city. But that great mountain, with the column of steam constantly ascending from its summit and floating away forming clouds, is a wonderful sight.

I did enjoy my trip to Naples exceedingly. After getting my room, and getting the dust washed off and my clothes brushed, I took a Corso Car, and went down and took another look at ancient Rome. It is now after eight o'clock, and I feel pretty tired, so I think I must go to bed pretty soon. When I get to Florence to-morrow afternoon I hope to find a letter from you. I am anxious to hear whether you are feeling any better than when you wrote the last letter I received.

Remember me to all.

Your loving husband,
S. F. Kirkwood.